

## Testimony of Peri Stone-Palmquist, LMSW, MPP, Executive Director

Student Advocacy Center of Michigan is pleased to offer support for HB 5409-5418 and urge the House Education Committee to pass these out of committee quickly.

Student Advocacy Center of Michigan has been around for 40 years helping struggling students get back into school and find a learning path to be productive citizens. We have offices in Ypsilanti, Detroit and Jackson and helped more than 500 school-age youth around the state last school year.

School is not meant to hurt, yet stories have been collected around the country chronicling the harm of restraint and seclusion. We have seen the grave harm experienced by students when adults use restraint and how dangerous schools can be when staff is not properly trained. Parents have called our statewide helpline so distraught when their child has been harmed at school. And rightfully so.

Restraint and seclusion practices are not evidence-based, are physically dangerous and restraumatizing, especially for students with a history of abuse and neglect. In the end, these practices push more of our most vulnerable students out of school.

We are pleased to see the state take such positive action to address these most serious issues. Thank you.\_\_\_